

c.) Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1- 47, 50, 52, 59, 62, 65 and 66 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. ~~Kindly amend Claims 48,~~  
51, 53-54, 57, 61, 67, 68, 71, 73 as follows. In accordance with the Revised Amendment Format, the status of all claims are presented below.

1 - 47. (Cancelled).

48. (Currently amended): An image forming apparatus, comprising: an image-bearing member, a charging means for charging the image-bearing member, an electrostatic latent-image forming means forming an electrostatic latent image on the charged image-bearing member, a developing means including a toner-carrying member for transferring a magnetic toner carried on the toner-carrying member onto the electrostatic latent image to form a toner image thereon, and a transfer means for electrostatically transferring the toner image on the image-bearing member onto a transfer material via or without via an intermediate transfer member,

wherein the charging means comprises a charging member supplied with a voltage and abutted against the image-bearing member to form a contact nip with the image-bearing member,

the charging member is selected from the group consisting of (i) a roller member having an Asker C hardness of at most 50 deg, ii) an electroconductive brush member supplied with a voltage to charge the image-bearing member, and (iii) a charging member having a magnetic brush formed of magnetically constrained magnetic particles having a volume-basis median diameter of 10-50,

the image-bearing member comprises an electroconductive support

a and a photoconductor layer comprising a silicon-based non-single crystal material and disposed on the electroconductive support, and is charged to a potential of 250 to 600 volts in terms of an absolute value via the charging member abutted against it,

~~the magnetic toner includes magnetic toner particles comprising at~~  
least a binder resin and a magnetic iron oxide, and inorganic fine powder and electroconductive fine powder present at the surface of the magnetic toner particles,  
the magnetic toner has a weight-average particle size of 3 - 10  $\mu\text{m}$ ,  
the magnetic toner has an average circularity of 0.950 to 0.995,  
and the magnetic toner contains 0.05 to 3.00 % of isolated iron-containing particles.

49. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the developing means also functions as a means for recovering a portion of the magnetic toner remaining on the image-bearing member after transferring the toner image onto the transfer material.

50. (Cancelled).

a<sup>10</sup> 51. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein in by the charging means, the image-bearing member is charged to a potential of 250 to 500 volts in terms of an absolute value.

52. (Cancelled).

a<sup>11</sup> 53. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the image-bearing member has a laminate structure including an electroconductive support, a photoconductor layer comprising a silicon-based non-single crystal material and a

surfacemost layer comprising a non-single crystal material ~~different from that of the~~  
photoconductor layer.

54. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein  
the a surfacemost layer comprises a non-single crystal carbon hydride film.

55. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the  
charging means is a means for charging the image-bearing member by abutting the  
charging member against the image-bearing member via electroconductive fine powder.

56. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 55, wherein the  
electroconductive fine powder is present at a density of at least  $10^3$  particles/mm<sup>2</sup>.

57. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein  
the image-bearing member is charged while moving the image-bearing member and  
the charging member so as to provide a relative speed difference between surface moving  
speeds of these members at the contact position.

58. (Original) The apparatus according to Claim 57, wherein the  
image-bearing member and the charging member are moved in mutually opposite surface  
moving directions at the contact position.

59. (Cancelled).

60. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the charging member is a roller member having a volume-resistivity of  $10^3$ -  $10^8$  ohm.cm.

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61. <sup>43</sup> (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the charging member is a roller member having a surface provided with minute cells providing an average spherical cell diameter of 5 - 300  $\mu$ m and a void ~~real~~ areal percentage at the surface of 15 - 90 %.

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62. (Cancelled).

63. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the charging member is supplied with a DC voltage alone or in superposition with an AC voltage having a peak-to-peak voltage of below  $2 \times V_{th}$  relative to a discharge initiation voltage  $V_{th}$  in DC voltage application.

64. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the charging member is supplied with a DC voltage alone or in superposition with an AC voltage having a peak-to-peak voltage of below  $V_{th}$  relative to a discharge initiation voltage  $V_{th}$  in DC voltage application.

65. (Cancelled).

66. (Cancelled).

67. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim ~~65~~ 48,  
wherein the magnetic particles have a volume resistivity of  $1 \times 10^4$  -  $1 \times 10^9$  ohm.cm.

68. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim ~~48~~ 48,  
wherein in the developing means, the magnetic toner is carried in a layer at a density of 5 -  
50 g/m<sup>2</sup> on the toner-carrying member to develop the electrostatic latent image on the  
image-bearing member.

69. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein in the  
developing means, the magnetic toner is carried on the toner-carrying member in an  
amount regulated by a ferromagnetic metal blade disposed opposite to and with a small gap  
from the toner-carrying member.

70. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein in the  
developing means, the toner-carrying member is disposed opposite to and with a gap of  
100 - 1000  $\mu$ m from the image-bearing member.

71. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein  
in the developing means, the magnetic toner is disposed on the toner-carrying member in a  
layer thickness smaller than a closest gap between the toner-carrying member and the  
image-bearing member, and is transferred onto the image-bearing member to develop the  
electrostatic latent image thereon.

72. (Original): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein in the developing means, a developing bias voltage comprising at least an AC voltage is applied so as to form an alternating electric field between the toner-carrying member and the image-bearing member, wherein the alternating electric field has a peak-to-peak intensity of  $3 \times 10^6$  -  $1 \times 10^7$  V/m and a frequency of 100 - 5000 Hz.

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73. (Currently amended): The apparatus according to Claim 48, wherein the transfer means includes a transfer member abutted against the image-bearing member via the transfer material to transfer the toner image from the image-bearing bearing member onto the transfer material.

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